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LOCAL & NATIONAL

Love triangle ends in fatal fall

SIYATHEMBA BEN

A LOVE triangle ended tragically when a Grey's Hospital clerk allegedly jumped from the fifth floor of a Northdale Hospital doctor's residence in the early hours of yesterday morning.

It is alleged that Sabelo Magagula (20) jumped after he had fought with his girlfriend and her other lover.

This is the first incident of its kind at the hospital, according to the institution's public relations officer, Mandisa Dlamini.

Dlamini told *The Witness* yesterday that Magagula had visited his girlfriend, a doctor at the hospital.

The girlfriend stays in a penthouse within the hospital premises.

"Her other boyfriend also came to visit her at the penthouse and tried to gain entry by banging her door but she didn't open.

"The man then went to a glass door on the other side of the building, broke it and gained entry," said Dlamini.

It is alleged that Magagula jumped out of the bathroom window after a fight took place in the doctor's bedroom.

Hospital management contacted the family and offered condolences.

Magagula's brother, who did not want to be named, declined to speak about the circumstances of his brother's death.

He and his uncle, Dics Mthembu, said his family was saddened by the death.

"We can't feel alright, especially because of the way he died," said Mthembu. He said he was informed by Magagula's colleagues about his death at around 7 am yesterday.

He described his nephew as a good person.

Magagula, who is originally from Mtubatuba, was staying in Pietermaritzburg for work reasons.

Mthembu told *The Witness* the family was not sure why his nephew had jumped to his death.

"We are very suspicious because we are getting too many pieces of the story."

Police spokesperson Lieutenant Joey Jeevan said an inquest docket had been opened and police were investigating.

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CAMPERDOWN: FORKLIFT KILLS SUPERVISOR

MLONDI RADEBE

A FAMILY lost a breadwinner when a supervisor at a Camperdown chicken farm died after a forklift struck him on Sunday morning.

Karim Imam described the death of his older brother, Liwewe Ernest, as a great loss.

"He was supporting his family and helping us," Karim said. Imam was 34 and came from Mariannhill.

Theo Delpert, the managing director of the poultry division of Astral Foods, said it was sad that the company had lost a supervisor this way.

He said the forklift was being driven by someone not authorised to do so. "We are investigating how he ended up driving it," said Delpert. "... We cannot give more details about this accident yet."

Captain Thulani Zwane said the forklift had been offloading boxes at the Ingomankulu Road property when the accident happened. He said Camperdown police had opened an inquest docket and no arrests had been made.

MANDELA: MOVING BACK TO QUNU TODAY

JOHANNESBURG — Former president Nelson Mandela is moving back to his home in Qunu in the Eastern Cape today, President Jacob Zuma has announced.

Mandela was in good health, Zuma said yesterday.

In a statement, presidential spokesperson Mac Maharaj said Mandela recently relocated to his Houghton home while his Qunu residence was being refurbished.

— Sapa.

SOBANTU BLAZE: Victim must have screamed for 15 minutes, says aunt

Fire kills wannabe singer

GABISILE NGCOBO

"SHE had a golden voice. All she wanted was to be a superstar."

This was the cry of Hlengiwe Zondi's aunt, Nonsikelelo Maseko (45), after Zondi died in a backyard shack fire in Sobantu on Sunday morning.

It is believed that she fell asleep with a burning candle, which sparked the blaze.

According to an official at the scene, she was burnt beyond recognition.

Zondi's aunt, Maseko, said the tragic experience still felt surreal. "It's like I'm dreaming."

Maseko said she was already in bed in the main house on the property when she heard a scream at around 10.30 pm.

"She was crying out 'Mama', repeatedly," Maseko recalled. "I thought someone was beating her. I immediately got up and went outside where I was greeted by big flames from the shack. I couldn't get close.

"She must have screamed for 15 minutes and then I heard a burst. Then there was silence. I just knew she was no more. I couldn't save her," the distraught woman explained.

Zondi's parents died when she was young and Maseko took on a motherly role.

"I loved her like she was my own child."

Maseko said Zondi attended several talent shows and backed up many musicians.

She said the shack was used for storage and as a guest room.

Zondi had been living in Gauteng and she had come to visit, bringing a friend.

The friend, who asked not to be identified, was out when the accident

happened. She said she was shocked when she arrived back on Monday morning to find the charred shack and Zondi dead.

Maseko said fire-fighters and police attended the scene after neighbours had doused the fire. They had called the emergency services numerous times.

"I still can't believe that she's gone," Zondi's friend said. "All my belongings, ID, bus fare to Gauteng, and all my clothes are gone."

She said of Zondi: "She sang like an angel."

Bronwen Jones, founder and director of Children of Fire, said that every year several people died in fires caused mainly by stoves and candles left burning, and by domestic violence.

"Usually for poor people there is no detailed investigation of how or why they burnt to death. It feels as if no one really cares," said Jones.

The police said they had opened an inquest docket.

Zondi is survived by a five-year-old son.

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PHOTO: GABISILE NGCOBO

What was left of the backyard shack in Sobantu after the fire that engulfed and killed Hlengiwe Zondi.



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Hlengiwe Zondi.

SAFETY TIPS: HOW TO PREVENT FIRES

CHILDREN of Fire's safety reminders this winter:

- If there is a power cut, or you use a candle, place it in a secure holder and not near a curtain or anything else likely to come near the flame.
- Don't stick a candle on a saucer; use a proper holder.
- Don't place a "night light" or a short fat candle directly on the edge of a bath — most modern baths are made of a type of plastic and if the candle is forgotten, it will melt through the plastic and could start a house fire.
- Don't leave candles unattended and don't leave children alone with candles or matches.
- Buy a fire extinguisher and get it serviced once a year.
- Buy a smoke alarm.
- Teach your family an escape route.
- Check your household electricity. Eighty percent of electrical compliance certificates in South Africa are false.

Msunduzi waste collection workers on go-slow

THOBANI NGQULUNGA

BEHIND the lack of waste collection in various Pietermaritzburg suburbs is a go-slow by permanent employees of Msunduzi Municipality.

And what's believed to be behind the go-slow is their solidarity with the 550 contract workers whose agreements with Msunduzi Municipality came to end at the beginning of May.

A source inside the municipality told *The Witness* that in the past, permanent staff had encouraged contract workers to continue in their jobs and promised that they would fight for them to be permanently employed.

"The municipal manager will be meeting with the union shop stewards to discuss this matter," said the source.

Municipal manager Mxolisi Nkosi confirmed that he would be meeting the shop stewards tomorrow morning, but did not disclose the agenda.

The lack of refuse removal has angered communities in Pietermaritzburg whose waste has not been

collected for the past two weeks. Among them are Northdale, Mountain Rise and Lincoln Meade.

A Northdale resident, who declined to be named, said rubbish was lying uncollected in Mysore Road, Balhambra Way and Jupiter Road.

"It's no use for the municipality to show off, having ordered those waste trucks, when dirt in the Northdale area hasn't been collected," he said.

Last week the municipality took delivery of seven trucks worth R11.2 million for refuse removal.

At the time Mayor Chris Ndlela said: "We cannot have a reason for waste not being collected, and collected according to schedule."

The Northdale resident said his suburb's collection day had been Thursday but was changed to Friday.

"What's going to be the municipality's excuse — they don't have any employees for those trucks or no petrol?" he asked.

"This is enough. They [the municipality] must either shape up or ship

out. It's frustrating for ratepayers," he said angrily.

A resident of Mountain Rise, who also declined to give his name, said he did not know why people were being paid if they were not doing their work.

"Our area is full of flies and big rats as a result of waste not being collected by the municipality."

He said the "rogues" who had "bankrupted" the municipality were gone, but those remaining were frustrating ratepayers.

"We had a meeting in Mountain Rise where the municipal manager, Mxolisi Nkosi, and [Community Development and Traditional Affairs] Deputy Minister Yunus Carrim were present, and they made all sorts of promises, which they clearly have

failed to keep," he said.

Nkosi admitted that there were challenges in the waste department.

"When we did not renew the contracts of 550 workers in the expanded public works programme, which came to an end in May 1, the staff began to be on a go-slow so as a result there is a backlog," he said.

He said the Msunduzi Municipality had asked the eThekweni Metro solid waste department to help out while dealing with the issue of staff in the waste department.

"We have the capacity within waste [collection], but it is a matter of getting workers to do their job," he said.

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TRACKING FIRM: KZN HIJACKINGS UP 21% THIS YEAR

DURBAN — The number of hijackings has increased up to 35% in the past two years in KwaZulu-Natal, the *Mercury* reported yesterday.

Vehicle tracking and insurance companies report that current hijacking hotspots are Umlazi, Chatsworth, Bluff, Phoenix, Berea, Umbilo, Greenwood Park, Amanzimtoti, Pinetown, Empangeni, and KwaDukuza.

Craig Taylor, managing director of BidTrack vehicle tracking and recovery, formerly known as Bandit, said the company's statistics showed there had been a 21% increase in hijacking in KwaZulu-Natal this year.

"In most of the incidents of hijacking in KwaZulu-Natal, the hijackers are following their victims home or are patrolling residential areas looking for pre-selected vehicles," Taylor was quoted as saying.

Tracker spokesman Gareth Crocker said that with passenger vehicles 60 to 70% of all hijackings occurred in business or residential driveways.

There had also been an increase in truck hijackings in recent months. The paper reported that the vehicles that were mostly targeted were VW and Toyota, and the Hyundai H100 delivery vehicle — the latter often for the cargo.

Witness Motoring reported on May 15 that the previous generation of Toyota Hilux bakkies and Corolla sedans, older City Golfs and Nissan 1400 bakkies were stolen most often.

— Sapa-WR.

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Mervyn Dirks.

PHOTO: FILE

Ex-mayor Dirks in soccer admin row

MLONDI RADEBE

FORMER Msunduzi deputy mayor Mervyn Dirks has become embroiled in a controversy in his role as a soccer administrator.

Dirks is the director of Brazil Football Club, champions of the Easter Tournament.

It is alleged that he intimidated Sicelo Xaba, manager and co-owner of Kings United, a rival soccer team.

Xaba alleged that Dirks threatened to kill him.

"I was at the offices of the South African Football Association (Safa) when Dirks threatened me, saying he is going to kill me with my boss, Zane Ahmed," said Xaba.

He said he suspected that the threat was a result of a complaint he had made to Safa that one of the Brazil team members played for two teams — one in the Vodacom league and the other in the SAB league, and did not have a clearance.

"The hearing favoured him and I appealed. On Tuesday I was at the office about that. He was with two other officials. I greeted them. He did not respond, but a few minutes later he started insulting me," Xaba said.

Dirks denies that he intimidated Xaba.

"Xaba always blames our team for their losses and even sometimes he will lay charges with Safa that our players are not registered, which is not true."

He said he had given a statement to the police and the two witnesses whom Xaba referred to, had been interviewed.

"I have nothing against the boy; he is just getting emotional," said Dirks.

Police spokesperson Lieutenant Joey Jeevan confirmed that a case of intimidation was being investigated.

"The alleged incident happened at the AB Jackson Sports Ground in the Alexandra Road area. No arrests at this stage. Police are investigating and will forward the docket to the senior public prosecutor on completion of the investigation," said Jeevan.